Port and Borough of King's Lynn.

ABBREVIATED REPORT

. . OF THE . .

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1918,

. . BY . .

J. RENORDEN KINGDON,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., B.A., Cantab.

King's Lynn:

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URBAN AND PORT SANITARY AUTHORITY.

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The Mayor (P. T. CHATTERTON, Esq.),

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Meetings:—The Fourth Friday in each month at 11 a.m.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE OF KING'S LYNN.

HEALTH OFFICE,
KING'S LYNN,
MAY, 1919.

GENTLEMEN,

I regret being unable to give a good report of the health of the Borough during 1918. This is mainly owing to the serious outbreak of Influenza which took place in October and November, and accounted for about 100 extra deaths.

Added to this there was an epidemic of Measles during the Spring, which was prevalent all over the town, followed by a fair amount of sickness of a Catarrhal nature amongst children.

The birth-rate was low owing to the absence of so many men at the war, and the number of marriages was 133, or rather less than in 1917.

I am glad to say that the Infant Welfare Centre continues to do excellent work, and that we have now a health visitor of our own who gives half her time for the purpose of seeing after the newly born babies after the attendance of the midwives; the other half of her time being given to school work.

The Local Government Board has suggested that this year's report should be brief, only giving such facts as would make the records of the Borough continuous. Therefore I have only given such facts as are absolutely necessary.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
J. RENORDEN KINGDON.

MEASLES.

There was a very widely distributed epidemic of measles during April, May and June—369 cases were actually notified, but I am sure there were a good many more. Most of the notified cases were between the ages of 5 and 15. The type was not of a virulent character, but no doubt this outbreak accounted for a number of cases of Bronchitis and Broncho-pneumonia which followed.

SCARLET FEVER.

A few cases of this disease were notified of a mild character, but I was unable to trace the origin.

Of the other notifiable diseases there is nothing particular to record.

CANCER.

I am glad to say that the number of deaths from this disease still keeps low compared with recent years. The usual number of deaths for some time has been over 30, but during the last two years the numbers have been only 24 and 25 respectively. I am unable to account for this.

INFLUENZA.

Epidemics of Influenza are known to have occurred far back into the ages:—During the last century there were epidemics in 1803, 1837-8, 1847-8, 1889-92. The epidemic of 1847 seems to have had its most noticeable symptom, catarrhal conditions, such as sneezing, which may account for the idea of many people, that Influenza starts with a cold.

The epidemic of 1889 came suddenly, spread mostly if not entirely over the whole world. The present epidemic has done the same.

The second wave of the 1889 epidemic was the most deadly and the same feature has occurred in the present one.

Between 1892 and last June the virulence of the disease seems to have been getting less and less: every winter there was generally a number of cases but latterly they were few.

The actual cause does not appear to be known, although a certain microbe called the Pfeiffer bacillus has been isolated in nearly all cases.

Last June the first wave of this epidemic came to King's Lynn; it attacked a few people, but was especially present amongst the Aliens in the Maltings in Baker Lane. It was quite mild in type, only lasting a few days and seemed to leave very little or no after effects. Only one death was notified.

From this time on to the middle of October only a few cases occurred, chiefly amongst soldiers on leave.

In the middle of October a very virulent type of the disease occurred, and so suddenly did it come, that it was impossible

to trace its origin. It continued for six weeks, but was at its worst about the first week in November. After the middle of the month it gradually lessened and seemed to almost entirely disappear about December 1st.

The death statistics of this wave are as follows :—

78 deaths from the usual inhabitants,

38 males 40 females.

7 deaths from soldiers and temporary residents.

During the six weeks there was an increase in the number of deaths from other notified causes. Taking the average of the few years previous to 1918, there were 33 deaths from all sources.

In 1918 there were 138 deaths during the same period, showing an increase of 105 deaths.

If now we take away the number of deaths of temporary residents, the net total would be about 100.

Again on going through the deaths notified during the six weeks I find 16 deaths from Pneumonia, 13 from Bronchitis, and 5 other doubtful cases, all of which might have been produced by influenza.

If most of these are added to the number 78 of definitely notified deaths from Influenza, it gives us the probable result as about 100.

As regard the different localities :—

There were 34 in the South part,

27 North ,,

12 Highgate and the East part.

On investigating the different types of homes in which the deaths occurred, I cannot find that more happened in the poor houses than in the better ones, but there seemed to be worse cases where there was overcrowding or bad ventilation. Another point which appeared to prove the good effects of fresh air occurred in the two camps of Aliens, which was as follows :—

In one camp the aliens were under canvas and there no cases occurred, but in the other which was in St. James' Hall, a number of cases occurred, these last were removed as they were taken ill to St. Nicholas' Hall; at first the cases were mostly mild, but as the numbers increased the type seemed to become more virulent.

It was particularly noticeable that many serious cases occurred amongst young adults; the reason seems to have been that they did not at once go to bed, but tried to go on working until they absolutely could not continue. The want of proper nourishment no doubt conduced to fatal results, it being very difficult to obtain proper slop food in sufficient quantities, such as milk and beef tea.

In conclusion I should like to mention the very good work done during the epidemic by our health visitor and the Queen's nurses.

Report of work done by Health Visitor from April 13th, 1918 to March 31st, 1919.

Visits paid to children under four weeks	277
Visits paid to children under fifteen months	375
Visits paid to children between fifteen months and five years	380
Total of visits paid	1032

In addition to the above, during the Influenza epidemic in the Autumn of 1918, 372 visits were paid to seventy-five families where children under five years were suffering from Influenza or its complications. These with the above, making a total of 1404 visits paid during the year.

Each Thursday afternoon was given to attendance at the Welfare Centre.

During the week ending August 1st, 1918, particulars with regard to blind persons residing in the Borough, were obtained for the Local Government Board.

FROM THE REGISTRAR GENERAL.

Causes of Death in King's Lynn during 1918

	Causes of Death.	Males	Females
	(Civilians only)		
	ALL CAUSES	186	171
1	Enteric fever		
2	Small-pox		
3	Measles	1	1
4	Scarlet Fever		1
5	Whooping Cough	4	5
6	Diphtheria and croup		
7	Influenza	39	39
8	Erysipelas		
9	Pulmonary tuberculosis	11	15
10	Tuberculous meningitis	3	2
11	Other tuberculous diseases	1	2
12	Cancer, malignant disease	7	18
13	Rheumatic fever		
14	Meningitis	1	1
15	Organic heart disease	20	12
16	Bronchitis	13	18
17	Pneumonia (all forms)	17	10
18	Other respiratory diseases	5	1
19	Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)		
20	Appendicitis and typhlitis		1
21	Cirrhosis of liver	2	1
21A	Alcoholism		
22	Nephritis and Bright's disease	2	3
23	Puerperal fever		1
24	Parturition, apart from puerperal fever		1
25	Congenital debility, &c.	9	5
26	Violence, apart from suicide	6	3
27	Suicide	1	
28	Other defined diseases	43	30
29	Causes ill-defined or unknown	1	1
	Special Causes (included above)		
	Cerebro-spinal fever		
	Poliomyelitis		1
	Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	23	10
	Total Illegitimate	5	—
	TOTAL BIRTHS	150	160
	Legitimate	131	143
	Illegitimate	19	17
	POPULATION for Birth-rate	20,055	
	,, for Death-rate	17,898	

Borough of King's Lynn.—Infantile Mortality during the Year 1918.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Wk.	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Total Deaths under One Year.
Whooping Cough									1	1
Congenital Malformations ...						1			1	2
Premature Birth	1		2	1	4	1				5
Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	2		2		4	2	1	1		8
Syphilis							2	1		3
Meningitis *(not Tuberculous)* ...									1	1
Convulsions							1	1	1	3
Bronchitis									1	1
Pneumonia (all forms)							1	3	3	7
Other Causes		1			1		1	1		3
TOTALS	3	1	4	1	9	4	6	7	8	34

BOROUGH OF KING'S LYNN.

Causes of, and Ages at Death, during Year 1918.

Causes of Death.	Nett deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the district.									Total Deaths whether of "Residents" or "Non-Residents" in Institutions in the District
	All Ages.	Under 1 year	1 and under 2.	2 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25	25 and under 45.	45 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Measles	2			2						
Scarlet Fever	1				1					
Whooping Cough	8	1	4	3						
Influenza	81	2	2	5	8	15	32	9	8	15
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	26					7	12	7		4
Tuberculous Meningitis	4		1		2		1			3
Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	3			1	1				1	1
Cancer, malignant disease ...	21						1	9	11	5
Rheumatic Fever	1								1	1
Meningitis	3	1	1	1						1
Organic Heart Disease	29						5	10	14	14
Bronchitis	27	1		1		1	1	7	16	17
Pneumonia (all forms	30	7	4	5	5	2	4	3		2
Appendicitis and Typhlitis ...	1					1				7
Cirrhosis of Liver	3							3		
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ...	4							2	2	3
Diseases & accidents of parturition	2						2			
Premature Birth	18	18								
Violent Deaths	6	1	1				1	2	1	9
Suicides	1							1		
All other causes	84	3		1	1	3	3	14	59	48
Totals	355	34	13	19	18	29	62	67	113	130

Borough of King's Lynn.—Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1918.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.								TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.							
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.							Old Lynn S. of Purfleet.	Old Lynn N. of Purfleet.	North End.	Highgate, Gaywood Rd., &c.	South Lynn within.	South Lynn without.	Hospital and Infirmary.	Cases removed to Hospital.
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards								
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	5		1	2	1	1			1	1			2		1	
Erysipelas ...	5				1	2	2			1	1	1	2			
Scarlet Fever ...	21		2	17	1	1			4	6		3	5	2		
Enteric Fever ...	3			2		1				2	1				1	
Poliomyelitis ...	1			1							1					
Pulmonary Tuberculosis...	22			2	7	11	2		3	3	2	2	10	2		
Measles	369	4	78	279	5	3			57	103	25	23	135	23	2	
Totals	426	4	81	303	15	19	4		65	116	30	29	154	27	4	

Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality during the Year 1918.

(Provisional figures. Populations estimated to the middle of 1918 have been used for the purposes of this Table.)

—	Birth-rate per 1,000 Total Population	Annual Death-rate per 1,000 Civilian Population.								Rate per 1,000 Births.		Percentage of Total Deaths.*			
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Violence.	Diarrhœa and Enteritis (under 2 Years).	Total Deaths under One Year.	Deaths in Public Institutions.	Certified Causes.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales - - - - - -	17·7	17·6	0·03	0·00	0·28	0·03	0·29	0·14	0·49	10·99	97	24·3	93·3	5·4	1·3
96 Great Towns, including London (Census Populations exceeding 50,000).	17·6	18·2	0·02	0·00	0·36	0·04	0·34	0·15	0·49	14·46	106	28·4	93·4	5·8	0·8
148 Smaller Towns (Census Populations 20,000—50,000).	17·9	16·1	0·03	—	0·25	0·02	0·25	0·14	0·38	9·73	94	15·4	94·5	3·9	1·6
London - - - - - - - - - -	16·1	18·9	0·02	—	0·42	0·03	0·43	0·17	0·56	15·67	107	45·0	92·5	7·3	0·2

* Non-civilians are included in these figures for England and Wales but not for other areas.